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DECEMBER 1994 94-3, 4

THE MISSOURI-MADISON PROJECT EXPANDS RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Over the past three years, in the process of relicensing dams along the Missouri and Madison Rivers, Montana Power Company (MPC) has worked with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service(USFS), the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (DFWP), local governments and the public to identify 35 new recreation sites. These areas are needed to satisfy rapid growth in demand for public recreation.

The proposed developments are on both public and private land and MPC shares responsibility for providing recreation opportunities under federal law regulating its license for nine dams on the Missouri and Madison Rivers. The areas affected are located between West Yellowstone and Fort Benton.

According to the recreation plan, people with disabilities will be provided equal access to recreation opportunities, unless physical terrain or other limiting factors are prohibitive. Because the project is still in the planning stages, specific facilities that will be made accessible at each proposed site have not been identified yet. The time schedule provided for the design and construction of the facilities varies from one to possibly seven years from now.

MPC, in cooperation with other agencies, intends to use the services of disability organizations and other interested people during the design and construction phases for each project. For example, volunteers from Access Montana, an organization comprised of individuals with disabilities, recently met with MPC and USFS planners. Additionally, Montana Independent Living Project is represented on and provides input to the Plan Development Committee, which is actively participating in the development of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Management Plan. This plan will guide and direct future recreation management along the Missouri-Madison corridor as indicated in MPC's license application.

For more information, contact Elvin Fitzhugh at MPC at 723-5454 ext. 73263 or Jeanne Schutt, MILP's representative on the Plan Development Committee at 442-5755 in Helena or 1-800-735-6457.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Best wishes for a happy holiday season from all of us at Montana Independent Living Project to all of our readers!

Our next issue of *FOCUS* will be out in January of 1995 and will highlight Legislative issues, support groups, and assistive technology. Throughout the next year we'll continue to keep you up-to-date on what's happening at MILP, independent living activities, and disability issues. If you have news, meetings, activities, or ads that you want included, give us a call. See you in 1995!

MILP SPEAKERS BUREAU NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

We regularly get calls from schools, groups, or agencies requesting speakers on disability-related topics for classes or meetings. When people call, we informally try to connect the caller with people who are willing to share their time and expertise to provide talks or presentations that will suit their audiences.

To better respond to these requests, we are setting up a Speakers Bureau to list names of people willing to talk to groups and then share those names with people seeking presenters. We would like to list volunteer speakers in each of the 14 counties in our service area: Broadwater, Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Granite, Jefferson, Madison, Lewis & Clark, Meagher, Park, Powell, Silver Bow, Sweet Grass, and Wheatland.

In the past, people have made presentations on specific disabilities such as mobility impairments, hearing impairments, visual impairments, or head injury and on other topics such as companion dogs, universal design, or building accessibility. People have talked to school classes, church groups, and civic groups.

What do you have to do to participate in this program as a speaker? Just call Melinda at MILP at 442-5755 in Helena or 1-800-735-6457. We'll ask you to fill out a form indicating your areas of expertise and what audiences you would be willing to talk to. You don't have to be a professional speaker - just have an interest in sharing what you know with others. Please help us by listing your name in our Speakers Bureau. For more information or to sign up, call us today!

HELENA INDUSTRIES AND MILP AWARDED GRANT TO SERVE PERSONS WITH BRAIN INJURIES

The Montana Vocational Rehabilitation Division has awarded Helena Industries and the Montana Independent Living Project (MILP) a three-year grant to develop methods for Independent Living Centers and Community Rehabilitation Programs to work together to serve the needs of persons with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI).

The grant, entitled Promoting Independence and Work: Community Options Project, will involve the two Helena-based agencies working together to develop a community service model to serve persons who have sustained brain injuries as a result of accidents or illnesses. The model will contain services to help persons with brain injuries live more independently and work towards gainful employment. The service model will be refined through the provision of services to as many as four individuals over an 18-month period.

The project will conclude with research on funding sources and sharing the service model with others. Questions? Call Les Clark at MILP.

ADA AND RURAL BUSINESSES

MILP now how has copies of the brochure "Improving Your Rural Business with the ADA." This small brochure is loaded with information on the Americans with Disabilities Act and practical solutions for compliance for rural businesses. To request a free copy, call Raelen at MILP today.

FOCUS is a newsletter for people interested in the development, improvement and expansion of community-based services which directly facilitate the independence, productivity and quality of life for people with disabilities. It is published four times a year by Montana Independent Living Project.

Staff: Jim Meldrum, Executive Director Raelen Williard, Editor
Board of Directors: Pat Domme, President; Glenn Jorgenson, Secretary/Treasurer; Dennis Alexander, Helen Conroy, James Hosking, Pat McNeill, Jim Nys, Tracey Reighard, John Shea, Grace Sicotte, Sylvia Stevens, and Richard Woolett.

Inquiries, comments and changes of addresses should be addressed to: ***FOCUS,*** Montana Independent Living Project, 38 South Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601; 406-442-5755 or 800-735-MILP (800-735-6457).

COMING UP NEXT
•CALL MILP TO LIST AN EVENT OR A CONFERENCE•

Jan. 2 54th Session of the Montana Legislature begins

Jan. 9 Montana Child Care Rules & Regulations Seminar. For more information, call Child Care Resources & Missoula Child Care Assoc., Missoula, MT, 406-728-6446.

Jan. 28 "Building Communication Skills with Parents." For more information, call Child Care Resources & Missoula Child Care Assoc., Missoula, MT, 406-728-6446.

Jan. 19 -20 Montana Health Care Authority Board meeting, Park Plaza Hotel, Elkhorn Room, A-B, Helena. For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, call 443-3390 in Helena or 1-800-733-8208.

Jan. Helena Homebuyer's Club for people buying a home for the first time begins in January. Classes will be held weekday evenings at Norwest Bank. Child care available. Sponsored by Helena Housing Authority Task Force. Contact Beki Brandborg, Building Better Businesses, 616 Helena Avenue, Suite 300, Helena, Montana 59601, 406-442-2265.

WANTED: WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL IN HELENA!

A group of teenagers with disabilities would like to watch or participate in wheelchair basketball in Helena. Does anyone have any ideas? The kids aren't thinking of anything big-time like setting up a formal team or league, but maybe scheduling one night for people to get together to play or watch basketball with other people in wheelchairs. If you are interested in this or have ideas to share, please call Peg Mathews at Family Outreach at 443-7370.

MONTECH'S AV RESOURCES AVAILABLE

MonTECH at the Rural Institute on Disabilities at the University of Montana has a growing collection of audio and visual resources. Video tapes and audio tapes are on a variety of topics, including assistive technology, equipment, and disability awareness.

These resources may be used, free of charge, by Montana residents for 30 days. MonTECH will pay the mailing costs to get the item(s) to the borrower. The person borrowing must pay for return shipment. For a list of resources or more information, call MonTECH at 1-800-732-0323 (in Missoula, call 243-5675) or write to MonTECH, Rural Institute on Disabilities, the University of Montana, 634 Eddy Avenue, Missoula, Montana 59812.

SUMMIT'S ABLE MEDICAL SUPPLY OFFERS DISCOUNT

Able Medical is wholly owned by Summit Independent Living Center in Missoula. All profits are used to help support Summit's advocacy and service programs. If you have not had the chance to visit Able Medical in Paxson Plaza, call or stop in and find out what they can do for you and take advantage of the money-saving coupon below!

- COUPON SPECIAL -

15% off any cash purchase

Coupon must accompany purchase or mail order

Offer valid through December 31, 1994

Limit - one coupon per customer per visit

Able Medical Supply Company
2700 Paxson Plaza, Suite K2
Missoula, MT 59801
(406) 721-4229 1-800-859-0113

CMCD MEETINGS SCHEDULED

CMCD (Coalition of Montanans Concerned with Disabilities) is a grass- roots organization whose mission is to promote the equal participation of all Montanans in all aspects of society. For more information or to join, contact Melissa Case in the CMCD Missoula office at 721-0694 or leave a message for a call back at 1-800-398-9002.

There are CMCD chapters in Bozeman, Butte, and Missoula. The meeting schedule for those chapters is: **Bozeman:** 2nd Wed. of every month; Meet at noon upstairs in Security Bank Building. For more information, contact Wade Parac, 587-6783. **Butte**: 2nd Tues. of every month; Meet at noon at the Copper King Inn. For more information, contact Grace Sicotte, 494-5143. **Missoula**: 3rd Tues. of every month; Meet from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Eagle Watch Estates, 565 Burton. For more information, call Melissa at 721-0694 or leave a message for a call back at 1-800-398-9002

FOR SALE

1983 Econoline Ford Van-351 engine, air conditioning, all electric lock system, deluxe wheelchair lift (Wind River), Hand control operations, automatic, cruise control, aptain's chairs, rear deluxe couch, cruise control, c.b. radio, more added options; extra clean deluxe vehicle; asking $8,950. Call Don in Great Falls, 452-5631.

Two Amigo scooters-One scooter, new in Dec. 1990, rear wheel drive, has recharger, 9" wheels, deluxe, asking $1200.00 OBO. Second scooter, 6" wheels; new tires, wheels, and seat; has recharger, asking $600.00. OBO. Purchase both scooters for $1500.00. Call Erhart in Helena, 442-9319.

Do you have questions on assistive technology or equipment? Call Jeanne Schutt at MILP for information on sources, types, cost, availability, catalogs, etc. at 442-5755 in Helena or 1-800-735-6457.

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HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY SCHEDULES MEETINGS

In April 1993, the Montana Legislature passed Senate Bill 285, an act providing for universal health care access, health care planning, and cost containment. Under this program, the state is divided into five health care planning regions and each region has a Health Care Planning Board. The 14 counties in the MILP service region are in Region 3 and 4. The January issue of *FOCUS* listed the county representatives for these 14 counties. The Board Chairs for each region are listed at the end of this article. During the next several months regional board members will be meeting with community leaders, health care providers, consumer groups, and others who are involved in health care and health care reform. They will learn about the available resources, needs, and deficiencies in their region's health care services and how this relates to underserved sectors. Each region will hold a public hearing on its draft plan and will invite anyone interested to attend and/or comment.

Montana Health Care Authority Board Meetings

NOTE: If you want to participate in these public meetings and need a reasonable accommodation, contact Elinor Edmunds at 406-443-3390 or 800-733-8208 or FAX 406-443-3417 to advise her of what you need.

June 9-10, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm both days
Willson School Auditorium
404 West Main
Bozeman, Montana

July 28 -29, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm both days
Park Place Auditorium
20 North 8th St.
Miles City, Montana

August 15-16, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm both days
Park Inn
211 East Main Street
Lewistown, Montana

Continued on Page 5

DEPT. OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS CONTINUES REVIEW OF LICENSING PROCEDURES

Last fall, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (DFWP) initiated a program review of their hunting and fishing licensing program as it applies to people with disabilities. The first phase of this program included reviews of other state programs and statutes, information gathering, and formulating preliminary recommendations.

Phase II of this program emphasizes soliciting comments from the public. People who already have a DFWP Conservation License for a person with a disability will automatically be receiving program information and a survey. Anyone else interested in this program can request information from: Connie Mills, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701, or by calling 444-2535.

PLEASE RETURN

SELF-MANAGEMENT GROUP CONTINUES TO MEET AT MILP

MILP continues to conduct group sessions for persons with head injuries. The group meets every other week at the Helena office. The group encourages participation by all of the members in trying to problem-solve issues of everyday life.

Recently, the group identified recreational ideas and each member was involved in planning and participating in an outing that included lunch and bowling. It was great fun and we hope to be able to try it again. The group has also been discussing dealing with personal relationships and problems encountered in relationships.

If anyone is interested in joining this group, call Karen or Les at MILP at 444-5755 or 800-735-6457.

MILP STAFF CHANGES

This spring, after over ten years with Montana Independent Living Project, Zana Smith resigned her position as executive director to pursue other areas of interest. Throughout the years, Zana was instrumental in many positive changes both in MILP and the independent living movement in Montana. We wish her well in her future endeavors.

Jim Meldrum has been selected as the Executive Director of MILP. Jim worked for MILP for the past two years as the MonTECH Program Manager. During that time, he managed the Assistive Technology Clearing-house, a program designed to ensure that people have access to assistive devices and technology to enhance their independence. He has been active in disability issues since 1965.

When Jim assumed the position of executive director, Jeanne Schutt moved into the position of Assistive Technology Specialist. She will also be continuing her responsibilities as ADA Specialist, offering fee-based accessibility survey services and other ADA consulting services to businesses and state and local government agencies.

TELL US YOUR ADA STORIES!

Because July 26 is the fourth anniversary of the signing of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), our next issue of *FOCUS* will be dedicated to reporting on ADA activities in Montana. We would like to hear from people around Montana about ADA success stories. Tell us about your favorite business that went out of their way to make accessibility modifications or accommodations. How about an employer who hires people with disabilities and offers accommodations? Tell us about your own efforts!

Tell us about the problems in your community--the barriers, the lack of understanding, or the people who just don't care! Recommend solutions! Help us plan for the future!

Call or write and tell us your ADA stories! Contact: Raelen, Montana Independent Living Project, 38 South Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601, 442-5755 or 800-735-6457.

FOCUS is a newsletter for people interested in the development, improvement and expansion of community-based services which support the independence, productivity and quality of life for people with disabilities. It is published four times a year by Montana Independent Living Project.

Staff: Jim Meldrum, Executive Director Raelen Williard, Editor **Board of Directors**: Sandy Armstead, President; Pat Domme, Vice President; Glenn Jorgenson, Treasurer; Helen Conroy; Jim Hosking; Pat McNeill; Jim Nys; John Shea; Grace Sicotte; Sylvia Stevens; and Jon Williamson.

Inquiries, editorial comments, and changes of addresses should be addressed to: ***FOCUS,*** Montana Independent Living Project, 38 South Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601; 406-442-5755 or 800-735-MILP (800-735-6457).

COMING UP NEXT ...

•CALL MILP TO LIST AN EVENT OR A CONFERENCE•

June 8, 1994 VR Public Hearing on State Plans. 1:00-3:00 and 6:00-8:00, Human Services Conference Room, 3075 North Montana Ave., Helena, MT 59601 (phone 444-1710, Voice or TDD) (See article, page6.)

June 9, 1994 VR Advisory Council and State Independent Living Council Meetings, 9:00-3:00, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Helena, MT 59620 For more information, phone 444-2590.

June 9, 1993 VR Public Hearing on State Plans. 1:00-2:00 and 6:00-7:00, Radisson Hotel, Broadway & 1st Ave. North, Billings, MT 59101 (phone 248-4801, Voice or TDD) (See article, page 6.)

June 9-10, 1994 Montana Health Care Authority Board Meeting. 8:00 am to 5 pm both days. Willson School Auditorium, 404 West Main, Bozeman, MT. For more information, contact Elinor Edumunds, 443-3390 or 1-800-733-8208. (See article, page 1.)

June 10, 11, 12 Mental Health Care for persons who are deaf/hard of hearing, Sponsored by Vocational Rehabilitation, College of Great Falls, Office of Public Instruction, MT Assoc. of the Deaf, and Front Range Community College. CE units and graduate credit available. For more information, contact Faith Timm at 406-727-7740 (Voice/TDD).

June 14, 1994 VR Public Hearing on State Plans. 1:00-3:00 and 6:00-8:00, Great Falls Vo-Tech Center (Heritage Hall), 2100 16th Avenue South, Great Falls, MT 59401 (phone 727-7740, Voice or TDD) (See article, page 6.)

July 26, 1994 Fourth anniversary of the signing of the Americans With Disabilities Act!

July 28-29, 1994 Montana Health Care Authority Board Meeting. 8:00 am to 5 pm both days. Park Place Auditorium, 20 North 8th St., Miles City, MT. For more information, contact Elinor Edumunds, 443-3390 or 1-800-733-8208. (See article, page 1.)

August 15-16, 1994 Montana Health Care Authority Board Meeting. 8:00 am to 5 pm both days. Park Inn, 211 East Main St., Lewistown, MT For more information, contact Elinor Edumunds, 443-3390 or 1-800-733-8208. (See article, page 1.)

SOCIAL SECURITY EXPANDS TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE SERVICES

You can get Social Security information 24 hours a day simply by calling the toll-free telephone number, 1-800-772-1213. Both personal and automated telephone service are now offered by the Social Security Administration. Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Social Security representatives are available to respond to your questions and requests for information. In some areas of the country, you may also be offered the use of an automated service when representative is not immediately available to respond to your call.

The automated service is available nationally from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. on weekdays. On weekends and holidays, this service is available around the clock. So, if the business you have to take care of doesn't require that you speak directly with a representative, you can use a touchtone phone and call the 800 number to request some forms and pamphlets or hear recorded messages about various Social Security programs.

FREE

Free to Someone with a disability. Desk, 77" x 68" u-shaped with drawers; blue formica removable top with work surface 32" from floor. For more information, call Tom Scott, Montana State University, Mechanical Engineering Dept., 1-800-523-4342.

FOR SALE

Two Amigo scooters—One scooter, new in Dec. 1990; rear wheel drive; has recharger; 9" wheels; deluxe; asking $1500 OBO. Second scooter, 6" wheels; new tires, wheels, and seat; has recharger; asking $800.00 OBO. Call Helena, 442-9319.

Guardian Hydro Tub Lift—Never used; $250 or will trade for hand control; Call Bozeman 585-3756.

Handicapped toilet fixture--Has elongated bowl and seat; white; cost new was $200.00 and asking $80.00; call 442-6909 (Helena).

Electric hospital bed—twin, 3 yrs. old, $450.00 or best offer, call 236-5502 (Great Falls).

Electric bed—Non hospital type; 1 1/2 years old, twin size, head lift and foot lift with control buttons, timed vibrator, asking $650, call 443-0881 (days) or 443-1204 (evenings) (Helena).

Touch Talker—Augmented communication device, now set up with software for children ages 6-13, depending on functioning ability, but can be set up for adults or computer access. For more information, call 227-5038 (East Helena).

Hospital bed—standard size (36" x 80 "), fully electric with side rails. Practically new! Asking $1,400. Call Tony at 443-4556 after 6 pm.

Accessible Dodge Van—1977, V8, side door, Hyde Lift for self wheelchair operation, hand and foot controls, mounted snow tires, reg. fuel, fully carpeted, three seats, excellent condition, low mileage. $9,000 or make an offer. **Bath bench**—with extension, $20.00. **Amigo, electric three-wheeled scooter**—new Gel cell battery and recharger, airline approved, thumb control, basket, complete care catalog, instructions, curb and step procedures, adjustable seat. Also comes with an extra motor. Never used. Sacrifice! Call 494-5143 (Butte).

1981 Everest & Jennings "Premier" electric wheelchair—chin control, but adaptable, manually reclines, battery charger, asking $370; **Roho wheelchair cushion**—16" wide by 17" deep, $100; **Clear acrylic wheelchair tabletop**—22" wide by 23" long, $10; **Brussee electric page turner**—fits large and small books and magazines, touch pad control, $175; **Pediatric blood pressure cuff**—$15; **1993 Action Arrow Sip & Puff electric wheelchair**—reclines by electric control, seat dimensions 14" wide by 17" deep; suitable for small frame person, leg length can be modified, battery charger, used less than 50 hours, price new $16,200, asking $9,750.

SUMMIT ILC OPENS MEDICAL SUPPLY COMPANY

A small unassuming store on Missoula's south side is providing the means for members of western Montana's physically challenged community to assume their place in mainstream society. The retail business, dubbed Able Medical supply Company, is a for-profit subsidiary of Summit Independent Living Center, also located in Missoula. Profits from the store will help support independent living services throughout western Montana. Able's goal is to provide a variety of competitively priced medical supplies to people with disabilities and the elderly.

The following types of products are available: ostomy and urological supplies, incontinent management bags, bath and toilet aides and accessories, ambulatory aids, skin care products,

Continued on Page 5

HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

(Continued from Page 1)

A copy of the regional meeting schedule was not available when this newsletter was going to press. For information on the meeting in your area, contact the board chair in your region as listed below.

Regional Health Care Planning Boards

Region 1: Board chair: Paul Hanson, 1614 N. River, Glendive, Montana 59330. 365-3306 (work), 365-6924 (home), 364-6921 (fax)

Region 2: Board chair: Jerome Morasko, PO Box 915, Shelby, Montana 59474. 434-5536 (work), 434-5746 (home), 434-3213 (fax)

Region 3: Board chair: Donna Wald, Star Route, Lodge Grass, MT 59050, 665-2310 (work), 639-2457 (home), and 665-2310, ext 138 (fax).

Region 4: Board Chair: Milly Gutkoski, 304 North 18th, Bozeman, MT 59715. 587-3242 (work and home)

Region 5: Board Chair: Robin C. Swimley, PO Box 1510, Libby, MT 59923, 293-2785 (work), 293-3389 (home), 293-6969 (fax)

GET INVOLVED IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

What can **you** do to be involved in the health care reform process?

• Contact your County Representative or the Board Chair for your region now. Let them know your concerns. It is important that these representatives understand why issues such as continuity of care provisions, health care cost containment, and no waiting periods for pre-existing conditions are important to people with disabilities.

• Keep in touch with what is going on! Sign up to be on the mailing list to receive *Health Care Reform*, the newsletter of the Health Care Authority by calling them at 1-800-733-8208.

•Attend meetings of the ***Regional Health Care Planning Boards*** or the ***Montana Health Care Authority Board.*** (See meeting schedules in previous article.)

•Work with groups advocating for the coverage you need:

Montana People's Action *Billings office*: 530 S. 27th St., Billings, MT 59101 (406) 245-6106 Contact: Dennis McCord. *Missoula office*: 208 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802 (406) 728-5297 Contact: Jim Fleischmann. *Great Falls office*: 1601 N. 2nd Ave., Great Falls, MT 59401 (406) 727-9962 Contact: Rick Van Aken.

Coalition of Montanans Concerned with Disabilities, P.O. Box 5679, Missoula, MT 59806 (406) 728-5297 Contact: Melissa Case.

SUMMIT ILC...

(Continued from Page 4)

wound management supplies, respiratory supplies, diabetic management supplies, orthopedic supports and splints, and lots of miscellaneous items. Products are delivered free with no minimum order in the Missoula area and mailed to out-of-town customers.

The store's grand opening was July 26, 1993, coinciding with the third anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Nelson is enthusiastic about the prospects for Summit's first business venture. As a registered nurse who has worked extensively in geriatrics and home health care, she sees a genuine need for a progressive endeavor like Able Medical. Home health deals with a population that consists of older individuals, people with disabilities, and people who are on fixed incomes, Nelson explained. Able Medical is accessible and will provide free postage to mail items to people who can't come in.

Able Medical Supply Company faces the main entrance to Southgate Mall and is located in Paxson Plaza, Suite K, 2700 Paxson Street, Missoula, MT 59801. Their hours are 8:30-5:30 Monday -Friday. For information or to order medical supplies, call 721-4229 in Missoula or 1-800-859-0113 from other locations.

VR INVITES PUBLIC TO COMMENT AT HEARINGS

Are you interested in the services provided by the Department of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services? Do you want to have input on: 1) What they do right? 2) How their services can be improved? 3) How their services are offered? and/or 4) What should be included in future programs? If so, you are invited to participate in the second Public Hearings on Montana's 1994 Draft Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan, Draft Independent Living State Plan, and Draft Strategic Plan for Montana Vocational Rehabilitation (MVR). Copies of the Draft Plans will be available for review at the hearing sites.

Hearing locations:

1) **BILLINGS**: (phone 248-4801, Voice or TDD)—June 9, 1994, 1:00-2:00 and 6:00-7:00, Radisson Hotel, Broadway & 1st Avenue North in the Broadway Room.

2) **HELENA**: (phone 444-1710, Voice or TDD)—June 8, 1994, 1:00-3:00 and 6:00-8:00, Human Services Conference Room, 3075 North Montana Avenue.

3) **GREAT FALLS**: (phone 727-7740, Voice or TDD)—June 14, 1994, 1:00-3:00 and 6:00-8:00, Great Falls Vo-Tech Center, 2100 16th Avenue South (Heritage Hall).

4) **MISSOULA**: (phone 329-5400, Voice or TDD)—June 2, 1994, 1:00-2:00 and 6:00-7:00, SRS District Office Conference Room, 1610 South 3rd West, Suite 110.

All sites are accessible. Persons who need special accommodations or an interpreter should notify the MVR by calling one of the above numbers at least a week before the hearing date so arrangements can be made.

If you can't attend, send comments in writing, on tape, or in other formats to Montana Vocational Rehabilitation, Box 4210, Helena, MT 59604 by June 17, 1994.

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MONTANA INDEPENDENT LIVING PROJECT

JANUARY 1994 94-1

STATE HEALTH CARE REFORM —JANUARY UPDATE—

County Representatives Selected for Regional Health Care Planning Boards

In April 1993, the Montana Legislature passed Senate Bill 285, an act providing for universal health care access, health care planning, and cost containment. This bill required the establishment of a Health Care Authority and the regional boards and charged them to conduct detailed investigations into all aspects of health care needs and services in every county.

The state is divided into five health care planning regions with a regional health care planning board in each region. The 14 counties in the MILP service region are in Region 3 and 4 of the health care planning regions. The county representatives for those 14 counties are listed below.

Region 3: Sweet Grass: Fern Prather, 300 East 8th, Box 367, Big Timber, MT 59011, 406-932-464 (home); **Wheatland:** Joan Stinson, P.O. Box 508, Harlowton, MT 59036, 406-632-4600 (Work) 406-632-4412 (Home)

Region 4: Beaverhead: Barbara Egan, P.O. Box 251, Dillon, MT 59725, 406-683-5205 (Work) 406-683-6786 (Home); **Broadwater:** Patricia Antonick, 726 Lower Deep Creek Road, Townsend, MT 50644. 406-266-3059 (Home); **Deer Lodge:** Audrey Aspholm, 400 Elm Street, Anaconda, MT 59711, 406-563-8414 (work), 406-563-6949 (Home); **Gallatin**: Milly Gutkoski, 304 North 18th,

Continued on Page 5

ILCS PROVIDE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Montana Independent Living Centers' Access Cooperatives for Assistive Technology help Montanans with disabilities find, fund, and acquire assistive tools and services that enable them to live, learn, work, and play more independently. Assistive devices include foam tubes put around eating and writing utensils to make them easier to grasp, speaking and hearing aids, wheelchairs and ramps, computers, along with the services that help people obtain what they need.

Regional offices - Services are provided from independent living centers (ILCs) in Billings, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula. Users and potential users of assistive devices can call the ILC in their region to learn more about equipment that meets their needs. Outreach workers may be available to visit you in your community and let you know what's available.

Learn about what you need - ILC staff can match needs with appropriate choices from over 20,000

Continued on Page 3

Happy New Year

SELF-MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETS AT MILP

MILP has been conducting group sessions for persons with head injuries at the Helena office. The group meets every other week and discusses issues of interest to people who have survived their injuries. Some of the topics discussed are: types of memory aids that help in our daily lives, anger management, and employment. Group members share many ideas and concerns in the hope that our experiences can benefit each other in our life goals.

When the group first came together, we listed ways that we can become more empowered including: taking over decision making as soon as possible and as much as possible; learning about information and resource access; identifying strengths and competencies and being willing to develop new ones; determining how impairments present an obstacle and identify ways to overcome those obstacles; taking time to adjust to new expectations; not being passive and dependent and not being afraid to fail. It is important to always learn from each failure.

At a recent meeting, the guest speaker helped identify employment goals, strengths, and weaknesses and what is needed to achieve those goals. This exercise helped us to identify those areas that need work, to better qualify us for those jobs we would like to pursue.

This group has seen much participation by everyone and people are anxious to continue to discover more about themselves. For more information about this group, call Karen or Les at MILP at 442-5755 or 800-735-6457.

MILP BOWLING CONTINUES THROUGH THE WINTER

Bowling is the name of the game—during the fall, winter, and spring months on Wednesday afternoons for 3 1/2 hours. It is a time when MILP consumers get together in Helena at the Sleeping Giant Lanes to have fun and compete at their favorite sport. Some use ramps, others just bowl. In either case, it is time out from the regular grind of daily life to recreate and socialize.

They exchange news of happenings in their lives-both happy and sad. They support each other and cheer for better scores! All-in-all, it is a fun and worthwhile experience—a great way to spend Wednesday afternoons! For more information on the bowling program, call Fran at MILP at 442-5755 or 800-735-6457.

MILP OFFERS ADA WORKSHOPS FOR AREA BUSINESSES

In February, MILP will offer a series of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) workshops to area businesses, organizations, and state and local government officials.

The dates and locations are:

- February 8, Helena
- February 10, Butte
- February 15, Bozeman.

The workshops provide three hours of detailed training and address specifics of complying with the law, including accessibility surveys and implementation plans.

For further information or to register, contact MILP at 442-5755 or 800-735-6457

FOCUS is a newsletter for people interested in the development, improvement and expansion of community-based services which directly facilitate the independence, productivity and quality of life for people with disabilities. It is published four times a year by Montana Independent Living Project.

Staff: Zana Smith, Executive Director Raelen Williard, Editor **Board of Directors**: John Shea, President; Sandy Armstead; John Camper; Helen Conroy; Pat Domme; V. Lee Harrison; Glenn Jorgenson; Dorinda Orrell; Paul Schofield; Grace Sicotte; Sylvia Stevens; and Jon Williamson.

Inquiries, comments and changes of addresses should be addressed to: ***FOCUS,*** Montana Independent Living Project, 38 South Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601; 406-442-5755 or 800-735-MILP (800-735-6457).

-LIFTT NEWS-
WHEELCHAIR SPORTS USA DESIGNATES MONTANA AS A REGIONAL SPORTS ORGANIZATION

Joe Todisco, Community Re-Entry Specialist for Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT) in Billings, recently attended the annual conference of Wheelchair Sports USA (formerly the National Wheelchair Athletic Association). At the meeting, Montana was designated the Regional Sports Organization (RSO) for Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Montana wheelchair athletes will now have access to regional and national networks of wheelchair athletes and have the opportunity to participate in organized regional and national competitions in their favorite sports. Wheelchair Sports USA is associated with the following sports: archery, table tennis, shooting, swimming, weight lifting, track and field, road racing, quad rugby, or basketball. Activities are open to men, women, and juniors.

Joe is trying to enlist the aid of volunteers to assist in organizing subchapters in each major city in Montana. He also wants to identify people who participate in or are interested in participating in any of the wheelchair sports listed above. For more information or just to give Joe your name, call LIFTT at 259-5181 in Billings or 1-800-669-6319.

-NCILS NEWS-

North Central Independent Living Services (NCILS) in Great Falls continues a series of workshops to offer information on what independent living is and the services they provide. NCILS is exploring the possibility of providing travel funds for people with disabilities who want to attend the workshop.

The final workshop in this series will be held in Fort Benton on January 27. For more information on this workshop or travel money available, contact Tom Osborn at NCILS in Great Falls at 452-9834 or 800-823-6254.

assistive devices and 900 plus services described in detail in MonTECH's computer databases.

High-tech consultation - To keep up with the rapidly changing world of computers and software, PLUK (Parents, Let's Unite for Kids) provides consultation statewide. They have a computer lab at Eastern Montana College so people can try different kinds of computers and software. Call them at 1-800-222-7585 or in Billings, call 657-2055.

Try before you buy - Using the resources of the Montana Assistive Technology Equipment Loan/ Lease Clearinghouse, staff can arrange for trials of various kinds of equipment to help you decide what works best for you, before you invest in the equipment.

Find funding and maintenance resources - If you decide to buy a piece of assistive equipment, the ILCs can help you explore funding methods and help with appeals. They can also help find local workers with the skills to maintain and repair your equipment.

For more information, contact the Montana Independent Living Project (38 South Last Chance Gulch in Helena) by calling 442-5755. Outside of Helena, call 1-800-735-6457. The ILC Access Co-ops are funded in part by the MonTECH Program through the Rural Institute on Disabilities at the University of Montana in Missoula. MonTECH can be reached by calling 1-800-732-0323.

MILP PROVIDES INFORMATION SERVICES

Do you need information on issues related to disabilities? MILP's professional staff can respond to questions on topics such as: accessibility, the Americans with Disabilities Act, housing, recreation and travel, rehabilitation, services and agency referral, and support groups.

If you have questions or want further information on our services, call today. (442-5755 in Helena and 800-735-6457 from other locations)

NATIONAL HEALTH CARE REFORM —JANUARY UPDATE—

President Clinton has made a commitment to make health care a right for all Americans by having the President's Health Security Act introduced into Congress. Montana's, Senator Max Baucus and Representative Pat Williams are listed among the sponsors of the Health Security Act.

The National Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities has analyzed all health care reform bills and states that "...all other bills which have been introduced, except for the President's plan and the Single Payer plans, are dangerous to children and adults with disabilities." Your action is needed NOW to ensure that the issues affecting people with disabilities are addressed as Congress begins to work on health care reform.

Now is the time to call or write all Montana's Congressional representatives and tell them that you expect them to support health care reform that meets the needs of people with disabilities. To help them understand your needs, you need to give them your personal and/or family health care experiences and provide them with your expectations for health care reform from the perspective of an individual with a disability.

In addition to the guarantee that every American child and adult has an absolute right to health care, the legislation must also ensure universal coverage that has no exclusions for pre-existing conditions; continuity of coverage, even if you move or loose your job; no lifetime cap on benefits; affordable deductibles and co-payments; choice of providers; community-rating underwriting that includes everyone in setting premiums; consumer involvement in system planning and implementation; and quality assurance and timely, impartial appeal mechanisms to ensure that children and adults with disabilities receive the services they need.

To contact members of the Montana Congressional delegation, call toll free: Senator Max Baucus, 800-332-6106; Senator Conrad Burns, 800-344-1513; or Representative Pat Williams, 800-332-6177.

DEPRESSION THE BIRTH OF THE BLUES

Depression has been called the world's number one public health problem. In fact, depression is so widespread that it is considered the "common cold" of psychiatric disturbances.

Depression has many signs and symptoms. Some of the most familiar one ares: A "down" or "blue" mood; Dramatic loss of interest or pleasure in previously enjoyed relationships and activities; Decreased energy level; Significant weight change; Insomnia or other sleep-related difficulties; Decreased ability to concentrate; Feelings of guilt or low esteem; Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide. By itself, none of these symptoms is significant. In fact, most people will experience one or more of them at some point in life. It's when several or all occur at once and last a long time (two weeks or longer), that major depression is present.

Depression is an illness which leaves a person unable to deal with life's events. The causes of depression may vary among individuals. Chronic or long term illness, grieving for the loss of a loved one, a major catastrophe, change in lifestyle , the use of certain medications are some of the more frequently recognized causes. More frequently, it seems that depression simply seems to occur without reason. Depression is an illness that results from thoughts that are distorted in some way.

Sadness is a normal emotion. Sadness is different from depression. Sadness will go away and depression will stay and usually get worse if not treated.

Treatment: Major depression is an illness which can be effectively controlled through the use of medications and therapy. Support groups also play an important role in treating depression. Counseling by qualified mental health professionals can assist those suffering from depression to reach new levels of understanding about themselves and their condition and help prevent recurring episodes.

If you have two or more symptoms listed above or suspect you suffer from depression, contact your doctor or a mental health counselor. Mental health professionals and services may be listed in the Yellow Pages of your phone book under the headings "Counselors" or "Mental Health Services."

-BOOK REVIEW-

By Nancy Procter
EIEIO Project Director
Montana State University

No, it's not virtual reality...but if you regularly deal with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and accessibility standards, The Accessible Housing Design File is an absolute must. Three hundred detailed and three-dimensional illustrations provide immediate clarity for anyone having difficulty making heads-or-tails out of UFAS (Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards) or ADAAG (Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines) flat line drawings. It takes a bit of concentration to process accessibility information and the Design File offers a more palatable digestion.

As the title indicates, the Design File focuses on residential housing. With little exception, however, these widely universal designs for housing accessibility can be used to provide accessibility for businesses and organizations. The Design File's chapter- by-chapter approach takes you on a guided tour, from the parking area all the way to the bathroom faucet. The text of the guided tour is conversational, leaving out uncomfortable terminology like "egress" or " horizontal circulation." For instance, in discussing thresholds, the Design File comments: " Raised thresholds are tripping hazards for many people and significant obstacles for people using wheelchairs..." Accompanying this text is a clear illustration of the effects of raised, tapered, and flush thresholds on a wheelchair caster.

The drawings demonstrate good accessibility features and solutions to tough design problems. The features are shown in the context of their setting within the house not as isolated elements. Perhaps even more important, they also clearly illustrate many common accessibility nightmares. For example, UFAS and ADAAG indicate the correct measurements for the clear space required at the side of a door for a wheelchair user. The Design File helps the reader experience the situation in side-by-side illustrations showing what happens when a wheelchair user attempts to use two different doors—one with adequate side space and one without. We not only learn what will work, but also fine tune our troubled-shooting skills in recognizing and avoiding potential access problems.

The Accessible Housing Design File was designed and produced by Barrier Free Environments (BFE), and supported in part with funds from NIDRR (National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research). Ron Mace and his associates at BFE are no newcomers to accessibility and the universal design approach. At a reasonable price of $44.95, I recommend buying two copies because, I'll guarantee, one will surely disappear.

(Mace, Ronald L., FAIAA. The Accessible Housings Design File. Barrier Free Environments, Inc., 1991, 213 pages. Available from Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1-800-842-3636.)

State Health Care Reform, continued

Bozeman, MT 59715, 406-587-3242 (Work), 406-587-3242 (Home); **Jefferson:** Terry L. Minow, PO Box 565, Boulder, MT 59632, 406-442-2123 (Work); **Lewis & Clark:** Ken Eden, M.D., 121 No. Last Chance Gulch, Suite G, Helena, MT 59601, 406-442-1994 (Work); **Madison**: Roy Nelson, PO Box 306, Twin Bridges, MT 59754, 406-684-5408 (Work); **Meagher:** Bonnie Gebhardt, 4568 Highway 12 East, White Sulphur Springs, MT 59645, 406-547-3393; **Park:** Richard Brown, HC 85 Box 4163, Livingston, MT 59047. 406-222-8313 (Work); **Powell:** H.W. Smith, Jr., 311 Freeze Out Lane, Deer Lodge, MT 59722, 406-846-1972 (Work); **Silver Bow:** Mary Sadaj, 3465 Quincy St., Butte, MT 59701, 406-494-6661 (Home).

What can you do to be involved in the health care reform process? MILP encourages you to contact your County Representative now. It is important that these representatives understand why issues such as continuity of care provisions, health care cost containment, and no waiting periods for pre-existing conditions are important to people with disabilities. Or, attend a Health Care Authority Board meeting. The next meeting is January 20th and 21st at the Colonial Inn in Helena and the County Representatives will be attending.

For more information about the status of health care reform or an agenda for the next meeting, contact Aggie Wismer, Montana Health Care Authority, PO Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901, 443-3390.

HELP!

We are in the process of updating our mailing list for FOCUS. Is your name spelled correctly? Do you get more than one newsletter? Has you agency moved or staff changed? Do you want to be removed from our mailing list? Is there someone else who wants to be added to our mailing list? Please call us and bring us up to date so we can ensure prompt delivery of FOCUS to everyone who wants it!

We are also updating our lists of people who have requested FOCUS in alternative formats. FOCUS is available in LARGE PRINT, audio cassette, computer diskette, or Braille. If you need an alternative format copy or have requested one in the past and still are not receiving it (oops, sorry!), let us know.

For changes to the mailing list or alternative format requests, call Melinda at MILP at 442-5755 in Helena or 800-735-6457 from other

FOR SALE

1979 Ford Econoline van with lift; power driver's chair, raised roof; hand controls. Can drive in chair or wheelchair. Controls for door are both inside and out. 75,000 miles; new paint, upholstery & tires; Excellent condition; $10,000 or best offer. For information call Shelly in Rapid City, SD, at 605-348-9704.

Sears Spa for Bath tub, $50.00; Sears Whirl pool jet for bath tub, $100.00. Call 782-4769 in Butte.

Hoyer lift; Electric Wheelchair, extra wide, like new; manual wheelchair; Hoyer Jacuzzi; Stand Aid; other miscellaneous equipment. Call 782-5231 in Butte for information and prices.

1982 Ford Van for sale. Wheelchair equipped, Ricon lift; hand controls, electric driver's seat, controls for lift on the inside and outside; 82,000 miles; Asking $5990.00. Contact Hal Buckingham at Laurel Ford in Billings at 252-8788.

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